MAT-SU MONITOR
MATANUSKA-SUSITNA COLLEGE
March 2010

Knot Just Another Thing

PHOTOGRAPH: Naomi and Joel Stamoolis provide dinner music for the attendees at "Tie the Knot, Community and College" Fundraiser at the Palmer Depot, with a painting by Featured Artist, Shane Lamb as a back ground.

By Michael Hamman
Special to the Mat-Su Monitor

The Matanuska-Susitna College (MSC) Fine Arts Department and the MSC Fine Arts Advisory Council organized a fundraising event on February 12. The event was called "Tie the Knot, Community and College" because of its effort to involve the community in supporting the college. The Fine Arts Advisory Council hopes to host this event annually and to continue to push community support of the college. The proceeds of the event are going to fund an art fair, which the college plans on hosting next year.

The event was wonderful and included an elaborate dinner catered by Turkey Red at the Palmer Train Depot. During the course of the evening, a variety of artworks and gift certificates were auctioned off. As everyone was enjoying their dinner, two valley musicians, Joel and Naomi Stamoolis, provided music. Shane Lamb was present to talk about his artwork that was auctioned off. Also among the art works were a couple of prints by Fred Machetanz, which were kindly donated by his family. All of the auction items were donated by generous Valley residents who were more than happy to support the college.

Among the many sponsors of the event was Sicily's Pizza, which is new to the valley, and which donated pizza to feed the event's volunteers. Professor Suzanne Bach, the Fine Arts Coordinator at the college, said that the event was a great success considering the high turnout and contributions from the community. Bach says that she hopes that future events will inspire even more enthusiasm from Valley business.

» See Tie the knot fundraiser **PG. 7**

Rock, Rap, and Folk OH MY! Rockfest 2010

By Bryce Hyslip Mat-su Monitor

Every year for the last 5 years Nameless Youth Ministries has put on the mother of all local concerts dubbed "Rockfest". The name has almost become a household name among young people in the Valley so it wasn't hard to fill the building. This year Rockfest hosted twenty different Alaskan bands that had musical styles as unique as the band members themselves. With three different stages playing different genres of music all night long just about anyone could find a style they liked. In fact if all the hours of music are added up from each stage there was about 13 hours of music jammed into one night.

» See Rockfest, **PG.11**

The 7:19 Fireworks

By Linda Cordle Mat-Su Monitor

The fireworks start at 7:19 on the dot, and for Stan Gutherie, owner of Country Cutts Hair Salon in Palmer, there's a big significance to that particular time, but we'll get to that later.

» See 7:19 Fireworks, **PG. 3**

Fool Me Once, Shame on You

Editoral by Traci Steele

Mat-Su Monitor

When I first became a student at UAA Mat-Su College, I had my reservations in regards to the safety of the campus. So many times I have heard in the news or through the grapevine that some poor student had been attacked or mugged while on campuses all over the country. However, I soon felt safe enough to keep my things in my car without locking the doors and I found myself looking less over my back while walking outside after dark. As the semester came and went, I grew to feel even safer on the college grounds because I had made so many connections with other students, and I also believed that we were responsible adults on campus.

This is why it saddens me to say that I no longer feel that sense of safety among my fellow students or on the campus itself. There have been many thefts as of recent at our college, which have left not only students as the victims but staff and faculty as well. It seems that there is a person, or a group of people that aim to take away from the tranquility of our college and turn it into a feeding ground for criminals. It is a shame that someone would take advantage of the trust that we have for each other here on campus and use it against us. I am disgusted that I would have to write an article about thefts at MSC and I hope that this disgraceful person or persons will leave our honest campus and reevaluate what path they are walking along. I personally am a strong believer in Karma, and have faith that things will eventually even themselves out with both the MSC campus and the petty criminals that have infested our college like rats.

As far as the safety on MSC property, I would greatly appreciate more surveillance until this criminal is apprehended. However, there are many things that we can do to create less of an opportunity for theft to happen, such as locking our car doors and keeping the windows rolled up completely, or leaving your valuables at home. Also, if you see anything out of the ordinary or suspect that there may be something strange going on, feel free to report it to someone at either the Physical Plant or Student Services.

Pebble is a Big Risk

By Larissa McMahill

Special to the Mat-Su Monitor

From wonderful landscapes and natural scenery, to wild life and clean mountain streams, Alaska is a place full of many wonders and beauty. It has indeed earned its name as the last frontier.

Today, however, our landscape is under attack by a proposed Pebble Mine. This mine is to be located at head waters of Bristol Bay . The head waters of Bristol bay are located approximately 200 miles southwest of Anchorage and just north of Lake Iliamna, near the villages of Nondalton and Iliamna. The deposit lies at the headwaters of Upper Talarik Creek and of the Koktuli River. The Upper Talarik Creek flows into Lake Iliamna, which drains into the Kvichak River, then empties into Bristol Bay. The Koktuli River flows into the Mulchatna River, a tributary of the Nushagak River, and then empties into Bristol Bay at Dillingham. Bristol Bay is one of Alaska's most pristine wilderness, home to many different kinds of wildlife and plant life and home to the largest salmon run in the world. The proposed mine is predicted to be the largest open pit mine in North America—large enough to fit the Empire State Building. The mine will extract gold, copper and molybdenum.

This site will be owned by a joint venture known as Northern Dynasty and Anglo America. A 50 – 50 partnership. Northern dynasty is a Canadian based mining company and Anglo America is based out of the United Kingdom. Both mining companies are amongst the largest in the world, and neither have the greatest track record. Anglo America is known for contaminating 34 sites all over the world. Northern Dynasty, the Canadian based company, has left native tribes plagued with contaminates. The facts are astounding. I encourage all who are reading this to do the research, read the facts and see for yourselves that the promises these mining companies are giving us are false. The facts are, there is no way they can operate a mine this size and not contaminate and affect the wilderness around them. No matter what the price. Alaska is our home. Let's not let money and greed crowd our love and passion for the beauty our state has to offer. We cannot take a chance on these mining companies' false promises.

MAT-SU MONITOR
MATANUSKA-SUSITNA COLLEGE

Managing Editor
Traci Steele

Media Advisor
Dr. Pete Praetorius

Layout and Design
Bryce Hyslip

Advertising
Kathryn Derendinger

Printer
Frontiersman

Questions and Concerns
matsumonitor@gmail.com
(907) 745-9728

Mat-Su Monitor would like to thank the Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman for all of their support. Call (907) 352-2250 to learn about home delivery.

7:19 Fireworks

Continued from cover

It's a quiet evening in Palmer the weekend after Thanksgiving. At exactly 7:19pm, the fireworks start with a loud volley of pops and booms followed by a brilliant flash of colors in the parking lot of the Palmer library. Don't plan on them starting at 7 or 7:30pm. It's 7:19 on the dot.

Stan and Country Cutts has been an anchor in Palmer since 1984. The salon offers everything from a trendy hairstyle (in purple or green if you prefer), to painted toenails, to a cup of specialized coffee. It's the friendliest place I've visited recently. With all the economic and political grumbles you hear so often anymore, being told "It's a beautiful day at Country Cutts" sure is a breath of fresh air. That's what Nichole told me when I called. "How may I help you?" Wow, the people here are really happy. No wonder they are the top Paul Mitchell salon in the Northwest, which says a lot being as Palmer only has a little over 8,000 residents.

Stan initially decided upon hair design after reading a vocational interest book at 21. He had a personal sit-down session all by himself, making the lists the book suggested and realized at 21 his three favorite things were women, money and hair. At the time, he also had other extended family members in hair design- an Aunt, a sister, a cousin, and his father's best friend was a barber, so you could almost say he was "conditioned" to be a hairdresser. Styling hair seemed to cover his "likes list" the best, and also created the funds he needed for his future goal to attend college and become a geologist. He almost finished his geologist degree, but he realized that most of the geologists in Alaska were out of work in the mid 1970s. Stan has also given a shot at other miscellaneous jobs: working on the railroad, commercial fishing and even trying out a stint working on the slope. He finally decided to stick with hair design. Hair always seemed to sustain him and meet his needs. So he's styled in Anchorage, had a salon in Unalakleet, worked in Circle near Fairbanks and cut people's hair on the docks in Seldovia. He finally arrived in Palmer in 1984.

Stan has touched many people in his everyday ventures. I personally am aware of a few: a teenager who needed a lot of incentive to stay on the right path; a recently opened small business, just starting out, where Stan swings by and leaves a twenty dollar bill for a basic cup of coffee. "Keep the change." People who are struggling to keep on the smiley side of life often recount stories where Stan has been instrumental in their lives. But knowing Stan, these things are not what this story should be about. Like water off a ducks back, Stan sheds these accolades and almost in a shy little boy smile he says he would rather not talk about what he has done.

The first fireworks display was actually a present for Stan's birthday. The lady who worked for him threw a big party with a fireworks display for his 50th birthday. One of the clients, whose husband just happened to own a fireworks stand, would get her hair done and the bill would eventually add up, and Jerry Mignano, who owned Jerry's Fireworks near Big Lake, would cash out his wife's hair bill with an occasional box of fireworks. Well, it was about time to clear the books when Stan's employee went to Jerry and they created a grand bash with fireworks to celebrate Stan's 50th birthday- his belly button birthday he calls it. That was the first year. The second year, they decided to celebrate a new lease and their new grand opening with another fireworks show. At the second show, a young woman came up to Stan and thanked him for the show, and he got totally touched that the fireworks meant so much to others. So the third year he decided to set the time at 7:19. To get people's attention. Why? Well, we'll get there.

Every year since, ten years now, Stan has made sure that there is a special fireworks show for Palmer the weekend after Thanksgiving. "It just seems like a great time," he says It's when most folks are home for the holidays, it's a good time for families to gather, with college students home and children out of school. When Jerry Mignano unexpectedly passed away at 43, another pyrotechnics specialist, Jackie Whidbey, stepped up and continued the tradition with Stan. It takes special permits, and the library is the only legal place in Palmer that the fire marshals will accept.

So what is so important about 7:19? Everybody believes it's because it's Stan's Birthday party, but not actually, Stan says. "The first fireworks show was for my birthday, the second one was for the grand re-opening and all the rest are for my birthday but not my November belly button birthday but my 7:19 birthday. I first came back to Jesus in 7:19- July 19th in 1997. I just figured it was a great blessing, so it's all in His glory and honor that we do the fireworks. As long as I'm blessed, I will to do it." It's a huge cost, but Stan says God always pays him back.

Stan will tell you a bad marriage, dumb living and chronic issues with a bad leg changed his life. He says "A bad marriage made me come to Christ, and a bad leg made me slow down enough to stay with him." Stan says there just became a day when he needed to turn around his life. Stan's advice for the college student just starting out? "Get an education- it doesn't matter- one year, two years, 20 years, or whatever, just get an education. It's the only thing they can't take away from you. They can take everything else from you but they can't take what you've built in your mind."

PHOTOGRAPH: Composite photo of the 7:19 fireworks show by Linda Cordle.

Living Off the Grid

By Linda Cordle
Mat-Su Monitor

Their day starts off just about like everyone else's… they don't turn up the thermostat but throw a couple of logs on the fire. After a quick stop at the compost potty, it's time to fire up the generator. It does take electricity to get started on the morning homework—you know, running the computer and all—but Michelle Torres says the Honda EU 2000 watt generator is quite sufficient for that.

Michelle and her husband used to live in Anchorage when their three children were growing up. They wanted to move to the Valley, but didn't want to uproot the kids from their schools, so they waited. They have owned the property in Meadowlakes since the kids were little, and as soon as their youngest graduated from high school, they made the move. They lived in a travel trailer the first summer while they built their cabin. In November of 2009, they finally moved in for good. "We saved money over the years, and when we built the cabin, we paid for it out of pocket, and now we don't have a mortgage payment. The property is paid for also," Torres says.

Michelle and her husband, live about 4 power poles from MEA's power. She says, "I am told it would take four electrical poles to get to us, and they cost about $10,000 per pole. Plus there would probably be additional charges for getting an MEA box put on the house." She's not so sure she even wants their electricity. Michelle says, "Even if electricity was available to us, I don't believe we would get it. We like to be independent of the utility companies."

The Torres's didn't intentionally go "Green." After living in Anchorage and paying high utility bills, "gouged" Michelle says, they decided they wanted to be self sufficient. "Also," she says, "living in Alaska with the potential for natural disasters, it's nice not to have to rely on other people for heat or lights. It is amazing how little electricity you really need." Though not connected to the grid, they still have their luxuries. The Torres's have MTA Internet and cable TV, a big screen TV, a Wii, a DVD player, ceiling fan, and pretty much anything else that other people have. They love to play Guitar Hero while the generator hums away.

Just because they have these luxuries doesn't mean they always use them. Most of the time they live a quiet lifestyle. "My husband and I are outdoor people," Michelle says. "During the summer we love to canoe, hike, fish and pretty much anything outdoors. We built a 17 1/2 ft. wood canvas canoe. We like the simple life style away from all the hustle and bustle. Living out here is perfect."

Michelle says, "We tend to like to do things the old fashioned way. I can or preserve a lot of the fish we catch, or make jams, jellies or relishes out of berries and vegetables we grow or pick. We have 20 acres, and it supplies us with enough wood for our woodstove. We spend a lot of time in the winter chopping and splitting wood so that it will be ready for the next season. In the winter we do a lot of crafts indoors in the evening. My husband will either make fur hats or work on a leather project, like making gun holsters. I sew and quilt a lot. For outdoor activities we like to snowshoe."

This summer they will put in a large garden, a root cellar and are getting a well put in. They plan on a 500 gallon holding tank, which they will pump the water into and will install an on-demand hot water heater. Right now her husband takes showers at work, and she takes her showers at the Laundromat when she is doing the wash.

So how much does it cost to live this way? "We run our home, which is about 500 sq. ft, with a Honda EU 2000 watt generator, which is very quiet and very fuel efficient. Our only annual costs are gas for the generator, which is about $60.00 per month, and propane, which runs our stove, refrigerator and back up heater." They have a 500 gallon propane tank, which covers the whole year. "We have a microwave that we use," She says, "but it's a low wattage one about 700-800 watts. I usually turn off all the lights when I use the microwave."

Michelle is pretty proud of their Sun-Mar compost toilet. "The compost toilet works great, and there is no smell at all." The SUN-MAR web site says their composting toilets recycle waste on-site by evaporating the liquids and converting the solids to a fertilizing soil, which is perfect for plants. "We use the compost made from the toilet in my flower garden," Michelle says. The SUN-MAR toilets use naturally occurring aerobic bacteria to convert carbon atoms in the waste to carbon dioxide and hydrogen atoms to water. The waste is oxidized and reduced to its essential minerals.

After the liquid is evaporated and solid waste composted, the residual is only about 3% of the starting volume, according to the web site. To keep the toilet "active," you must use a biologically active mix of hemp and coarse peat moss.

"We even had Christmas lights on our trees outside, but we used led bulbs. All our light bulbs in the house are the energy saver, low wattage bulbs. They are 13 watts, but put out 60 watts of light," Michelle says. "We have an old fashioned corded phone that works when we don't have the generator on. Most people's phones won't work during a power outage." To have a dial tone you don't need electricity if you use the old phones and not the cordless kind."

Michelle says they don't recycle but do burn most of their trash in a burn barrel when the Mat-Su Borough OK's it. "We will be getting solar panels this summer and an inverter battery system," Michelle says. "We will store the power from the solar panels in battery banks and the inverter will allow us to use our lights and the TV without the generator being on. We only intend to use the inverter at night when we don't want to have to get up and turn the generator off."

The Torres's children think it pretty special what Mom and Dad are doing. The only thing they do that's green is use the low wattage bulbs. Michelle says, "Eventually, two of our three kids want to move to the Valley and build houses." Most likely those kids will need backup generators" she says.

For more information about their appliances see:
http://www.sun-mar.com (the EXCEL-NE non-electric composting toilet)
http://www.danby.com/products/refrigerators

DIVORCE?
SEPERATION?
CUSTODY?
TRY MEDIATION

- Avoid unnecessary attorney's fees.
- Minimize the negative effects of divorce on your children.
- Make your own decisions regarding custody and property.

Contact Kathleen C. Barron, Attorney-Mediator
Call 907-373-1450
Email kbarron@gci.net

The Renewable Energy Field and Alaska's Future

By Linda Cordle
Mat-Su Monitor

This spring, Mat-Su College offered its first of many classes towards an Occupational Education Certificate (OEC) Degree in Renewable Resources. This new program is the first ever program geared towards renewable energy offered anywhere in Alaska. The program was initiated in 2008 when Mat-Su College hosted a forum of community members and experts to discuss appropriate skills and learning goals needed to prepare prospective students for new vocations. Vocations in renewable energy span just about all areas of business.

Construction jobs are affected by new methods to save energy and the new materials that need to be installed and maintained properly by specially trained employees. Government overseers will need to be trained in new methods concerning these materials. There will also be an increasing need for knowledgeable employees in waste management and recyclables. The auto industry will be widely affected from the manufacturing of "green" cars to the auto mechanic who is knowledgeable in their repair. Alternative fuels and bio-fuels will require professionals in many fields as well as the government overseers to make sure these fuels are manufactured and handled safely. Commercial buildings and homes alike are using methods to harness the sun, the wind, and water so electricians will need to adapt their methods to provide for these new technologies, as well.

The fuel costs and problems with logistics in rural Alaska has been a long-term challenge and are now driving the search for alternative sources of power like wind turbans and wind-diesel hybrids. The lack of fuel often leaves rural small communities in life or death situations when diesel fuel supply sources are cut off from the communities by weather. So considering back-up solutions just makes sense for rural Alaskan communities. Energy and environmental experts are also seeking ways to "green" up coal and electricity in our urban areas. There is continuing debate over oil development and using coal resources. Finding a happy balance by providing for our energy needs, and doing that in an environmentally responsible way, creates many challenges for Alaska's resource future. The "green" VS "drill baby drill" polar perspectives, and the debate that comes along with that even creates jobs for educated resource mediators, lawyers and the like.

But back to the problem; one solution is solar photovoltaic panels. They are more commonly being used as a back-up system in residential areas as well as a source of power. Bering Straits Native Corporation in Nome installed 93 solar panels on its Nome office buildings recently. Another native corporation, CIRI Corporation, is developing Alaska's first large commercial scale wind energy project on company land on Fire Island in Cook Inlet to help fuel the railbelt grid. Their plans call for 36 turbines capable of producing 54 megawatts of electricity. Their web site states this would be enough to power more than 19,000 homes. Commercial wind turbines are also found in Perryville, Nome, Shaktoolik, Chignik, Kipnuk, Fairbanks, Healy, Willow, Kodiak and many other rural Alaskan communities. Chena Hot Springs uses geothermal energy under the resort to generate power.

On the other side of the equation from creating new energy sources there is saving our energy resources. An increasing number of jobs are geared towards recycling materials. When Joe and Connie Mazut of Palmer started their recycling company, Ready Recycles, in November of 2009, they started with a conversation of, "why not?" It had become increasing harder to throw things away in their home, and they suspected it was happening in other peoples' homes too. They saw a need, and now they have forty-two customers and growing, including schools, businesses and residential customers. Mat-Su College uses their services.

Did you know recycling one ton of paper saves 17 mature trees, 7,000 gallons of water three cubic yards of landfill space, two barrels of oil and 4100 kilowatt hours of electricity (enough energy to power the average American home for five months)? At Ready Recycles, commercial customers receive weekly pick-up services and pay by the pound at a very nominal rate. Joe gathers faithfully with his trailer of tubs, traveling from the Butte to the other side of Wasilla at Church road, including routes down Knik-Goose Bay road and all points in between. They provide residential customers with recycling containers, weekly curb-side pick up, and will also separate customers comingled recyclables for $18 a month. Seniors get doorstep service for no extra charge. They accept Aluminum, steel cans, PETE #1 plastic (soda, juice and water bottles), HDPE #2 plastic with seams (milk jugs, windshield washer containers, etc and plastic wrap), office paper (computer paper, envelopes, etc), mixed paper (magazines, catalogs, phone books, egg cartons, etc) and newspapers and cardboard. For Joe and Connie Muzut "Why Not?" has become a fun, satisfying vocation.

With the proper knowledge and understanding, creative solutions to our energy needs can be found but it won't come easily. One thing is for sure, every career in Alaska will be affected, and for the student looking for a satisfying vocation, this field is wide open.

Other information can be found here:
www.readyrecycles.com
http://sustainruralalaska.blogspot.com
http://sustainable.cchrc-research.org/tag/rural-alaska/
http://alaskarenewableenergy.org
www.smartenergyalaska.com (Lukas@smartenergyalaska.com)

Writers Sharpen Your Pencils!

By Jane Deuster

Attention all writers, it's time turn on those creative juices. The University of Alaska Anchorage and the Anchorage Daily News, are joined in partnership with Alaska Center for the Book to present Alaska writers the opportunity to compete in this exciting annual event. Winning entries will be awarded cash prizes, announced in the Anchorage Daily News, and selected entries will be published in the ADN and posted on LitSite Alaska (LitSite.org). Entries must be received by April 21, 2001. Additional information, entry rules and forms can be found at http://adn.com/creativewritingcontest Questions regarding the Creative Writing Contest should be directed to creativewritingcontest@adn.com

The format for the Alaska Creative Writing Contest was the brain child of Ronald Spatz, professor of English at the University of Alaska Anchorage. His vision to create a writing contest that would draw in participants of every age in every part of Alaska has been an ongoing success story for twenty-eight years, beginning in 1981. Spatz not only founded the Creative Writing Contest here in Alaska, but he also founded the Alaska Quarterly Review and LitSite Alaska, the online literary Website (www.litsite.org). I strongly recommend you take a moment to review this website because it is brimming with fascinating and helpful literary articles, not to mention the complete list of past Creative Writing Contest winners. Many colleges and universities host writing contests, but this contest differs because it is open to the public. The importance of opening up the contest to the public lies in Spatz's belief that a great university is one that reaches out to improve the quality of life within its classrooms and within the community, and this writing contest provides a way of reaching out to all Alaskans.

Whether novice, professional, or somewhere in-between, Alaskan writers are encouraged to tell their own stories in their own words, and the contest has multiple categories for doing just that. Categories include Fiction, Non-Fiction, and Poetry; so whether you consider yourself a poet, a weaver of fiction, a conveyor of non-fiction, or all three, there is sure to be a venue suitable to your literary talents.

So belly up to the desk, grab a cup of java (or milk), sharpen those pencils (or flex those typing fingers) and get your entries submitted.

Contest Categories and Prizes:

Fiction

Elementary Grades K-3 $25
Elementary Grades 4-6 $25
Grades 7 -12 $50
Open to the Public $100

Non-Fiction

Elementary Grades K-3 $25
Elementary Grades 4-6 $25
Grades 7 -12 $50
Open to the Public, $100

Poetry

Elementary Grades K-3 $25
Elementary Grades 4-6 $25
Grades 7 -12 $50
Open to the Public, $100

Grand Prize $200

***Contest Entry Rules:**

1. The contest is open to Alaska residents. All judges, editorial or administrative employees of the Anchorage Daily News, and faculty or administrative employees of the University of Alaska are ineligible. College students who maintain Alaska residency may enter.

2. Work published previously in any copyrighted newspaper, magazine, book or other media is ineligible. Writing for school publications may be entered. Entries must be original. 3. Contestants may enter one work of fiction (not to exceed 25 pages), one work of nonfiction (not to exceed 25 pages), three poems. A contestant may enter all categories.

4. Submissions should be typewritten and double-spaced. Each submission requires a separate completed entry form. Please clearly indicate on the entry form ONE category for each submission.

5. Entries should be e-mailed (PDF, MS Word, or text only) to creativewritingcontest@adn.com no later than 5:30 p.m., April 21, 2010. If the entry cannot be e-mailed, it can be hand-delivered to the 3rd Floor Information Desk of the Loussac Library, or mailed to Alaska Center for the Book, Attn: UAA/ADN Creative Writing Contest, 3600 Denali, Anchorage, AK 99503 Faxed submissions are not accepted.

6. No submissions will be returned.

7. Panels of Alaska writers, journalists and teachers will judge. (Teachers will not judge their own students' entries). A panel of judges selects the Grand Prize winner. Judging and winner notification will be completed by June 3, 2010, and announced in the Anchorage Daily News in June.

8. All contestants agree to publication in the Anchorage Daily News, print and online editions, and LitSite Alaska. Authors of winning entries may be asked to submit a digital copy of the submission.

9. The decisions of the judges are final. Submission indicates acceptance of all contest rules.

The benefits of being a member of your local financial co-op really add up.
Now I can build a better financial future for myself!
MATANUSKA VALLEY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
mvfcu.coop
745-4891
694-4891
For all your financial needs!
Your savings federally insured to at least $250,000 and backed by the full faith and credit of the United States Government.
NCUA

Tie the Knot Fundraiser

Continued from cover

The City of Palmer showed their support for the college by attending the event in mass. The Mayor expressed his vision and love of the college by stating that he believes Palmer is a college town regardless of city boundaries. Also, he said that he looks forward to watching the college grow as a part of the community.

I personally was excited to see how the community came together to support Mat-Su College. It was moving to see the creative and beautiful works of art that two of our very own students, Denise Reeve and Taylor Buxton donated. I am looking forward to seeing the community and the college come together in the future for other exciting occasions.

"The Carbon Crew"

By David Johnson

Special to the Mat-Su Monitor

Be on the lookout for the Mat-Su Carbon Crew during March and April. They are a group of business students attending Professor Holly Bell's, hands on, Small Business Management class here on campus. The Mat-Su Carbon Crew is in the middle of an exciting class project. The assignment is to create a business plan for a local non-profit organization. The group's final business plan will describe the preparation and actual implementation of a public awareness/fundraising campaign called "What is Your Carbon Footprint?" The campaign will try to raise $5,000 to promote ongoing projects at Valley Community for Recycling Solutions (VCRS). The students will be introducing a "carbon footprint calculator," and they will focus their efforts on helping to educate the public on ways to reduce their individual footprint.

The Mat-Su Carbon Crew worked very hard, early in the term, to create a great proposal, present it to VCRS, and receive the green light to actually execute the plan. The group will have a public unveiling of their business plan and the campaign on February 25th. The purpose of the business plan is to raise local awareness of the Human Carbon Footprint and CO2 impact on the environment. The plan will also discuss the business of carbon credits and carbon sequestration efforts worldwide.

As part of their efforts, the Carbon Crew will be working at the VCRS trade show booth at the 30th Annual Valley Home Show on March 19,20, and 21. The theme of the booth will be "The Carbon Footprint," and the team will help design the display. Other marketing plans include campus awareness events, telemarketing, radio and newspaper interviews, and very possibly a television appearance.

The Mat-Su Carbon Crew will study and promote the chief pursuit of our age; creation of Green Jobs and Green Energy Solutions along with the "3 (Green) Rs": Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. They will also speak in their business plan about the Renewable Energy Certificate program available at Mat-Su College and the ongoing combined efforts of the campus and VCRS to bring new educational opportunities to the Valley. Excitement is growing as the community recycling center's new building prepares to open later this year.

The Mat-Su Carbon Crew consists of David Johnson, Shana Ellington, David Gehring, Val Kudryn and Patrick Sherman. For more information contact David Johnson at 232-4765 or VSDAJ6@uaa.alaska.edu

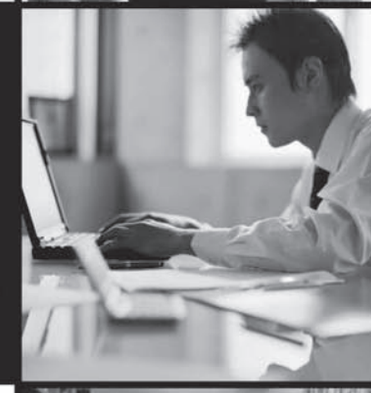
CAREERS @
Mat-Su College

UAKJobs.com

UAKJobs.com is the University of Alaska online recruitment system. This system allows applicants to search for employment opportunities, create an applicant profile, and apply online for positions at Mat-Su College!

Apply at MSC Today!

- Visit the Mat-Su College website at: www.matsu.alaska.edu
- Select the "Employment" link
- Select the "UAKJobs.com" link
- Create a new applicant profile
- Search by location "Palmer"
- Review current MSC job postings
- Apply for a new dynamic career!



Competitive compensation combined with excellent health care and retirement benefits make the University of Alaska—Mat-Su College one of the most desirable places to work in the Valley.

Contact Andrea Andrews at MSC Human Resource Services:
(907) 745-9725

www.matsu.alaska.edu

MSC Director To Retire

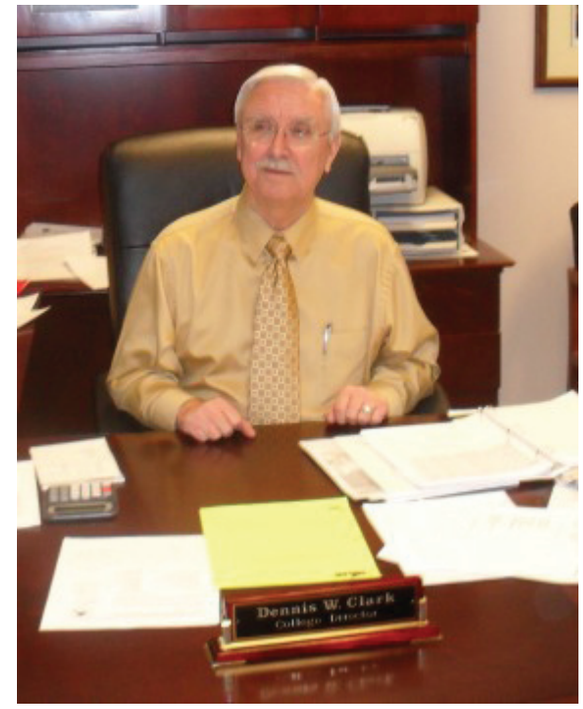
The Retirement of Dennis Clark
By: Bradley S. Lucas
Mat-Su Monitor

For the past four years, Matanuska-Susitna College has thrived under the leadership and vision of Director Dennis Clark, who previously served as the director of the Eagle River Campus for seventeen years. It was announced recently, however, that Director Clark will be retiring at the end of June, providing that a suitable candidate has been found as a replacement.

I recently had the pleasure of speaking with Director Clark about his retirement. He told me that what he considered to be his greatest accomplishment while working as the director of Mat-Su College was that he was able to create a non-micromanaged environment, which has allowed people to work effectively and efficiently, and in turn make the college more effective and efficient.

He also told me that he loved every minute he worked at the university and that he would miss the people the most: the students, the faculty, the staff, and the community. With a chuckle, however, he also informed me that he "will not miss having to get up at five o'clock every morning."

When asked about the qualities that he would like to see in his successor, he told me that the new director would need to be someone who knew when and how to step aside and let processes and people work. Although the search for a new director has commenced, there has been no news yet as to who may fill Director Clark's position at Mat-Su College. I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with Director Clark basically since I became a student at Mat-Su College in the spring of 2008; therefore, I know that I speak for many people at Mat-Su College when I say that Director Clark has been a wonderful asset to the college and the University of Alaska system and that he will be greatly missed.



Crime Wave Hits Campus

By: Kathryn Derendinger and Pete Praetorius

Students and faculty around Mat-Su College are in shock over a spree of thefts on an otherwise tranquil campus. A vehicle and a purse have been reported stolen, and the word in the hallways is that a jacket and an IPod have also turned up missing.

The vehicle, a 2004 yellow Jeep Wrangler, owned by Renewable Energy Instructor Kat Keith, was stolen on Monday afternoon, February 15th from the parking area behind JKB. In addition to the Jeep, the thieves made off with Keith's laptop. Keith says that she had just paid off the loan on the vehicle, and that she had changed her insurance to only liability coverage in order to save money. Now it's "all gone," Keith says.

Also stolen was a woman's purse. The purse was stolen just before noon on Saturday, February 3rd. A student accidentally left her purse in a stall in the women's restroom in the first floor of FSM. When the student realized that she had forgotten her purse, she went back to the women's restroom to retrieve it, but it was gone. She checked the other women's restrooms, but NO SUCH LUCK. The main offices are closed on Saturdays, so there was no way to check to see if her purse had been turned in. When she left Saturday evening, she still had not found or heard anything about her purse. When the student returned to school on Monday to see if anyone had turned in her purse, she was surprised to learn that a janitor had found it Sunday evening in the men's restroom in Snodgrass. The purse was returned, but it was missing a small amount of cash and some High Blood Pressure medicine.

Investigators are examining video of both the hallways and the parking lots in search of clues.

Student usernames will change at Spring Break.

Students' usernames will change to the new statewide UA Username over Spring Break. This is the first step in making it easier for students to move between campuses within the University of Alaska as the new username will work at all campuses. Making this change during Spring Break will allow you time to get adjusted to the new username before finals. Look for announcements online, in your email and around campus between now and Spring Break.

Movie Reviews

A local review of recent blockbusters
By: Andrew Loeb

The Tooth Fairy
Genre: Comedy

In "Tooth Fairy," Dwayne Johnson plays an aging hockey star that is trying hard to hold on to the last little bit of his youth. When a rising star on the hockey scene starts to steal his thunder, he undergoes a change of a supernatural sort; he becomes a living image of his nickname, "Tooth Fairy." As we expect any character to be, he is hesitant and disregards his new role as a bad dream and continues to live his life normally; that is, until his being a Tooth Fairy interrupts his being the Tooth Fairy. Meanwhile, he is trying to juggle a girlfriend and her two children; something has to give... right? He then struggles to decide which is more important: His career, his family, or his duty.

The story is well told, but the issue I have with the movie are in two parts. The first is the fact that the main character has problems keeping his emotions in check. He tends to shift radically from one emotion to the other, and the character feels unrealistic. The second part I have a problem with is that the chronology of the film is off. The last few scenes take place in a span of hours, but story-wise, it should have taken another whole day. Aside from those points, the movie was done well.

I would recommend renting this movie when it comes out. It is definitely worth seeing once; everyone should be able to take something from this film. I will leave its replay value at low as the theme is quite generic.

Humor: 7/10 Story: 7.5/10 Characters: 7/10
Effects: 8/10 Replay: Low

Valentine's Day
Genre: Romantic Comedy

Valentine's Day is a day many people look forward to. A day filled with love, happiness, joy, and chocolate. For the characters in the movie, this same structure holds true, but what kind of movie would this be if it only showed people being happy and in love? Valentine's Day puts a twist on the day and gives us a peek at the true life stories that regular people go through. We go through heartbreak, treachery, plans gone awry, and the real difficulties of relationships on the greatest day of love in the whole year.

I was hesitant going into this movie because the preview poster showed so many different characters, and usually movies like that become bogged down with trying to keep up with all the stories, they fall short in the entertainment department. I'd like to say they finally got one right. By intricately intertwining the story's back and forth, they were all able to progress at a rate that allowed the watcher to keep up. While I can't quite place my finger on why this movie isn't excellent, it is definitely a movie that should be added to your collection for those special nights with a special someone.

Romance: 8/10 Characters: 8/10
Stories: 8/10 Comedy: 7.5/10
Replay: High

Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief
Genre: Fantasy Action

Percy Jackson is your common, everyday, student that just wants to hang out with his friend Grover and not have to constantly worry about his mother's well-being because of her marriage to a grotesque thing of a man. What he didn't know is that those dreams are about to be put on hold when he is accused of stealing Zeus' Lightning Bolt, the most powerful mythical weapon in existence. With his friends Grover and Anabeth, daughter of Athena, beside him, he journeys to find out the real lightning thief and recover his mother's soul from Hades.

This film is incredible. It has the right mix of humor, action, and plot. Just as I began to wonder where the action was going to come back in, it was right there. The characters we're witty with their remarks to the mythical beasts, and it was free from any gross humor. The plot held steady throughout and didn't leave me asking a lot of questions. Beasts, objects, and myths were explained by the characters enough for the watcher to have knowledge of what was what in the world… and underworld.

Overall, this film was done very well and should be a part of every fantasy movie collector's library.

Action: 9.5/10 Characters: 9/10 Story: 9/10
Effects: 10/10 Replay: High

Campus Cache
30% off
With this ad we are offering 30% off one item with the purchase of a regular priced item. You must bring in the ad to qualify. One coupon per customer.
Check out our webpage for a full selection of our MSC logo clothing.
Monday-Thursday
8:30am-7:30pm
Friday 8:30am-4pm
Mat-Su College Palmer, Alaska
www.matsu.alaska.edu/campusResources/campusCache
Tel: 907-745-9739
Expiration Date: 04/30/10
Matanuska-Susitna College
University of Alaska Anchorage

Sophia's KafeNeo

Greek Cuisine in the Valley
By: Jane Deuster
Mat-Su Monitor

A good day is when everything falls into place, when everything fits, and disappointments are minimal. A great day constitutes a day incorporated with culinary delights, a palette fulfilled and satisfied. A visit to Sophia's KafeNeo unquestionably constitutes a great day.

Sophia's KafeNeo opened in May 2006 and is located on the Palmer-Wasilla Hwy in the Shadow Mountain Professional Center, just across the highway from the AT&T Sports Center. The Greek name "kafeneo" translates to coffeehouse; "kafe" which, of course is coffee, and "nea" which means news. The kafeneo is the center of every Greek village where everyone comes to share and learn the latest news. Traditionally, the kafeneo was "men only," but the name Sophia's KafeNeo is befitting of a coffeehouse where everyone is invited to relax and share current news. Owner Sophia Moropoulos was born in Homer, AK, but she has strong family ties in Greece. It was while living in Athens that she developed an appreciation of the Greek culture, history, and cuisine. Consequently, she has created a menu that specializes in authentic, Modern Greek food.

The afternoon I walked into this coffeehouse, I had intentions of grabbing a take-out order, dashing home, inhaling the food, and then wrapping up my restaurant review article. But while waiting for my take-out order, I decided to sample two of their house specialties, a cup of Greek coffee, and a plate of baklava, and this is where the story begins.

Greek coffee was not designed for the faint of heart! This robust and daring java is meant to sip and enjoy; even the preparation of this beverage is an art form. First, finely ground coffee is placed in a cup and piping hot water is poured directly over the powdered grounds. A teaspoon of sugar is added, and once the grounds settle to the bottom of the cup, it's ready for consumption. And Sophia's homemade baklava will transport you directly into baklava heaven! Warm, sweet, filo pastry layered with walnuts, honey and a touch of lemon, utopia! Suddenly, I found that my dash-in, dash-out plan evolved into a peaceful, culinary experience that afternoon, and it dawned on me that Greek food is meant to be lingered over and savored, and the KafeNeo is an atmosphere suitable for absorbing the tantalizing Greek music, and the aromas wafting from the kitchen.

Sophia's other specialty beverages include an assortment of flavorful milkshakes, smoothies, espressos, loose leaf tea, Turkish apple tea, mountain tea, Italian chocolate, iced frappe, Arabic coffee, fruit lemonades, Italian cream sodas, and blended mochas.

Additional food specialties include homemade biscotti, chocolate hand-dipped pretzels, Spanikopita (spinach pie), Gyros and TZATZIKE (a homemade cucumber yogurt sauce), just to name a few! I ordered the Greek Lemon Chicken Soup (which I highly recommend), and warm, oven baked pita chips with tzatziki (yummy). Other menu items include fresh Mediterranean and Moroccan salads, Chicken Pitas, Pastas, oven toasted sandwiches, and Greek appetizers. Stop in for a delicious Breakfast Pita (scrambled eggs, feta, tomato, onion, and tzatzike wrapped in a fresh baked pita, or Cinnamon Toast served with pineapple cream.

The Kid Friendly Classics include grilled cheese sandwiches, peanut butter and jelly, and pita chip nachos. They also deliver to the Palmer-Wasilla area with a minimum order of $30. Stop by and pick up a menu to take home.

The décor and atmosphere at Sophia's KafeNeo is casual, comfortable, eclectic, and serves many purposes, including art and music venues, study groups, weddings, public forums, and of course, a fabulous place to eat. In addition to a dining area and coffee bar, there is also a lounging area with board games to keep the kiddos entertained. Students can get a little school work done with the use of free internet access.

Friday nights come to life at Sophia's KafeNeo with live music and art showcases. Musical varieties include jazz, slam poetry, the Fuze Worship Band, and thrash and metal shows, just to mention a few. The art showcases allow local artists and customers the opportunity to interact while enjoying the coffeehouse atmosphere.

Sophia's KafeNeo is open from Monday-Thursday from 10am-5pm and on Fridays from 10am -9pm. The phone number is 907.745.9001, or you can contact Sophia via myspace.com/sophiaskafeneo to book a private reservation. If you're looking for a typical, cookie-cutter, franchise or fast food restaurant serving "plastic tasting food," Sophia's KafeNeo is not the place for you. If, on the other hand, you are looking for a place with personality, a place that serves unbelievably delicious food, you need to visit this pearl of a restaurant. I guarantee a visit to KafeNeo will turn your ho-hum day into a great day! Greek food is a celebration of life, so celebrate with a visit to Sophia's KafeNeo.

Rockfest 2010

Continued from cover

At 5:00 PM the music began and except for a half hour break the music didn't stop until midnight. It's a great event that gives local bands an awesome opportunity to play and it gives locals a great concert experience. There have been multiple bands that have played at Rockfest and shortly after gone to the lower 48 to give mainstream a shot. One band even won a national contest and record label deveopment deal. The same bands are excited to come play at Rockfest whenever they get a chance. There's just something about Rockfest that gives it an electrifying feel and makes people look forward to January. Lots of people come back year after year.

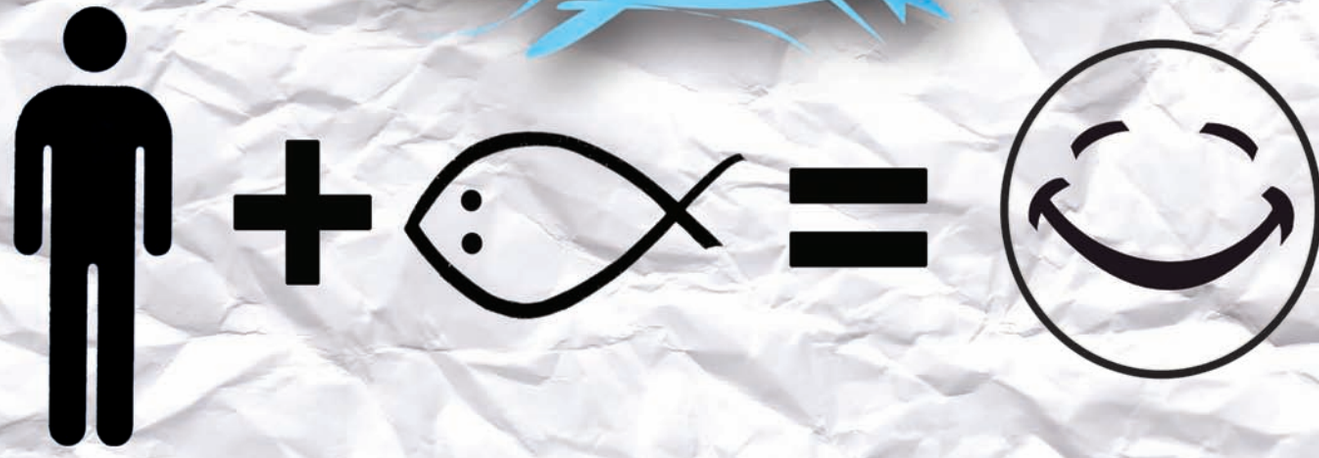
Included in the ticket price is free food and chances to win a huge array of prizes from several different iPods to cash. At 10:20 everyone is brought into the main hall for 15 minutes where the grand prizes are given away and a pastor gives an encouraging message and offers to pray for people, then the music starts right back up. This year there were many upgrades to the concert experience including visual enhancements. A large array of LED lights were added along with heavy fog to create a Hollywood concert feel. The whole experience is amazing and is definitely worth the twenty bucks or fifteen for people who registered online early. Anyone who is serious about music or just likes to have a fun time should definitely put Rockfest on their calendar for 2011.

PIZZA TIME
Mile 4 Bogard Rd.
Crossroads Center • Wasilla
HOURS:
Monday-Thursday 11:00am-9:00pm
Friday & Saturday 11:00am - 10:00pm
Closed Sunday
2 Lg. Single Topping Pizzas
PIZZA TIME $20 or $22 Pick-up Delivery
2 Lg. Two Topping Pizzas
PIZZA TIME $24 or $26 Pick-up Delivery
2 Lg. Three Topping Pizzas
PIZZA TIME $28 or $30 Pick-up Delivery
~Also On The Menu~
· Lasagna or Spaghetti
· Barbeque Ribs
· Calazone
· Sandwiches
· Salads
· Inferno Chicken Wings
· Hot & Spicy Chicken Wings
· Honey BBQ Wings
376-9883 or 376-9884

Big Bear
Halibut Charters

bbhc™

Homer,
Alaska



Call now and mention this ad to get a special deal.
Summer 907-235-7222 Winter: 907-745-0830

www.BigHalibut.com